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CATAWBA VALLEY AND HIGHLANDS, BURKE COUNTY, WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

By

William Carson Ervin

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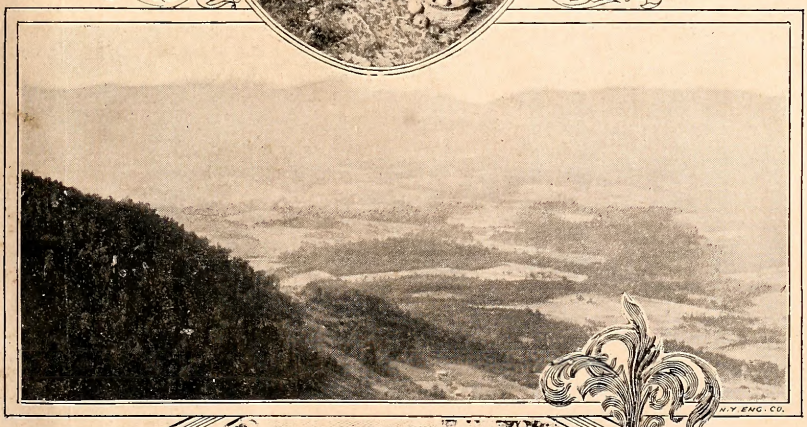
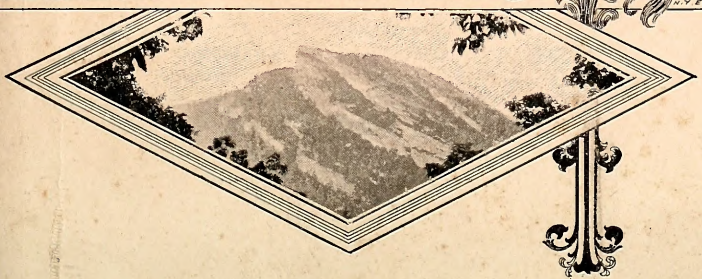
Catawba Valley and Highlands

BURKE COUNTY

NORTH CAROLINA





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CATAWBA VALLEY AND HIGHLANDS

BURKE COUNTY

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

BY

W. C. ERVIN.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRED. W. TYLER, MORGANTON, N. C.

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THE MORGANTON LAND AND IMPROVEMENT CO.

MORGANTON,
BURKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA.

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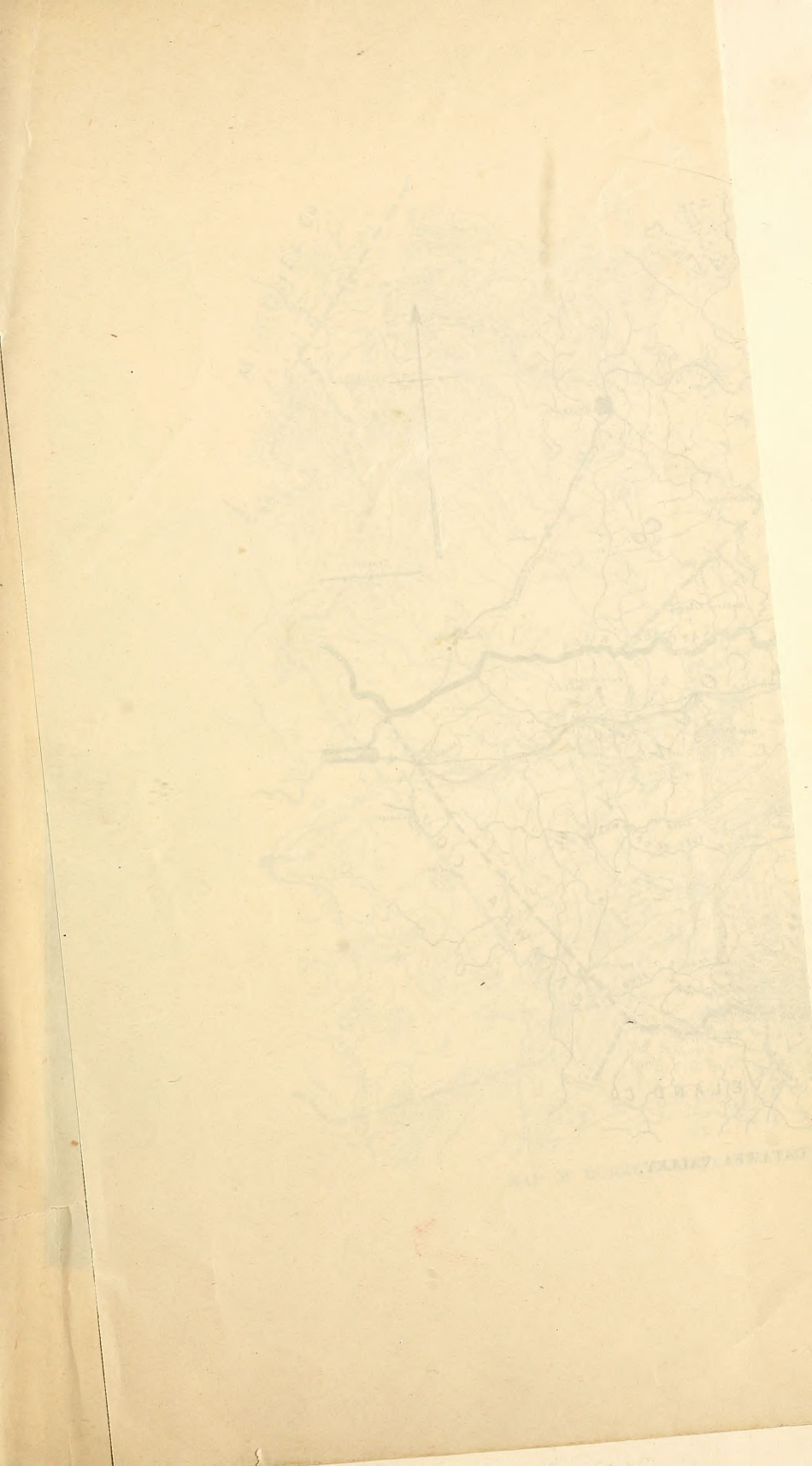

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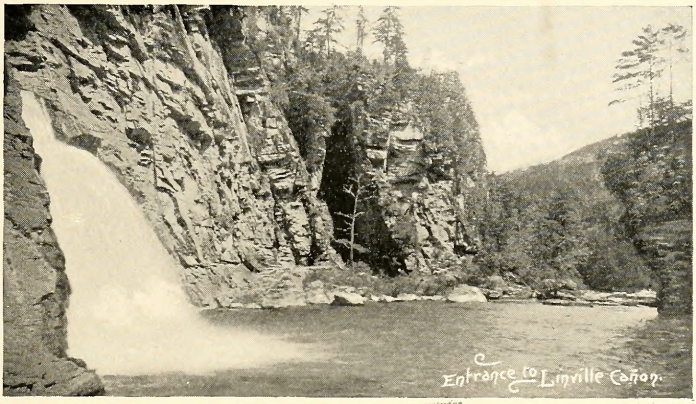
MAP OF BURKE COUNTY AND UPPER CATAWBA VALLEY.

LINVILLE FALLS—BURKE COUNTY.



Entrance to Linville Cañon.

Upper Creek Falls

HAIL TO THE HIGHLANDS!

Hail to the Highlands of North Carolina!
Grandest of States, let them ring with her name.
Where now the "witling" who dares to malign her?
Where now the country that knows not her fame?

Hail to the Highlands! The land of bright waters,
Land of the mountain, the cliff, and the dell.
Health to their sons, and long life to their daughters!
Peace to the homes where the mountaineers dwell!

Hail to the Highlands! How fruitful their valleys,
Boundless their forests, and priceless their ores!
Healthful the zephyr that over them dallies,
Swept from the glen where the cataract roars.

Hail to the Highlands! Upon them is dawning
Light that will fill them with wealth and with power.
What of the noontide, if this be the morning?
What will the fruit be, if this be the flower?

By Way of Introduction.

This little brochure, descriptive of Burke County, North Carolina, and of the upper valleys of the Catawba river, has been published and a copy has been sent you, in order that you may know something of what we believe is the choicest bit of "mother earth" in all of Sunny Dixie. It is not intended to give in detail either a description of its scenery and environment or a catalogue of its products and resources; but only to present a few "Snap Shot" sketches that may lead you to investigate the truth of the statements herein contained.

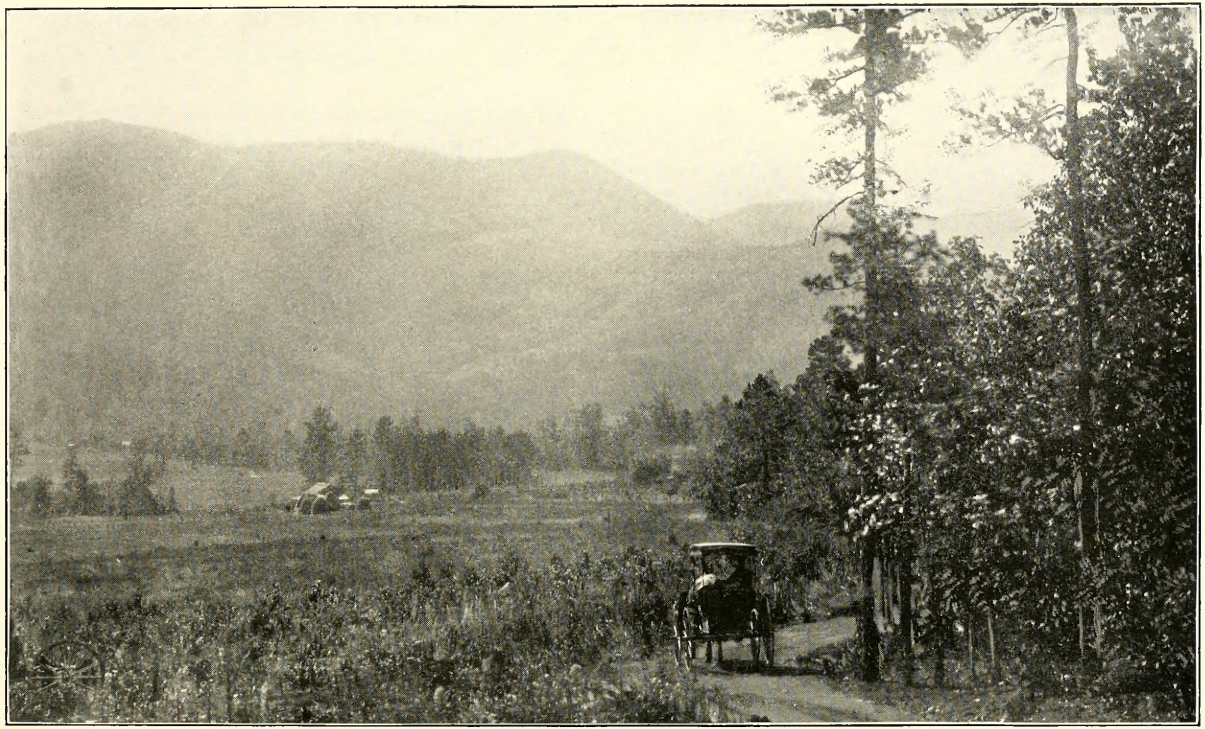
A country that has—

Fertile soil,
Hospitable people,
Magnificent scenery,
A perfect climate,
Vast mineral wealth,
Abundant waterpower,
Great forests of pine and the hard woods,
Immunity from droughts and blizzards and unseasonable frosts,
Located on one of the greatest railway lines in the country,

is an ideal spot for a home, and offers to capital a most inviting field for investment. Such a country is that briefly described in this pamphlet, and of whose beauty the accompanying illustrations convey but a faint impression.

Very truly,

The Morganton Land and Improvement Company,
Morganton,
North Carolina.



DENTON'S MOUNTAIN—Five Miles South of Morganton.

SOUTHWARD THE TIDE OF EMPIRE.

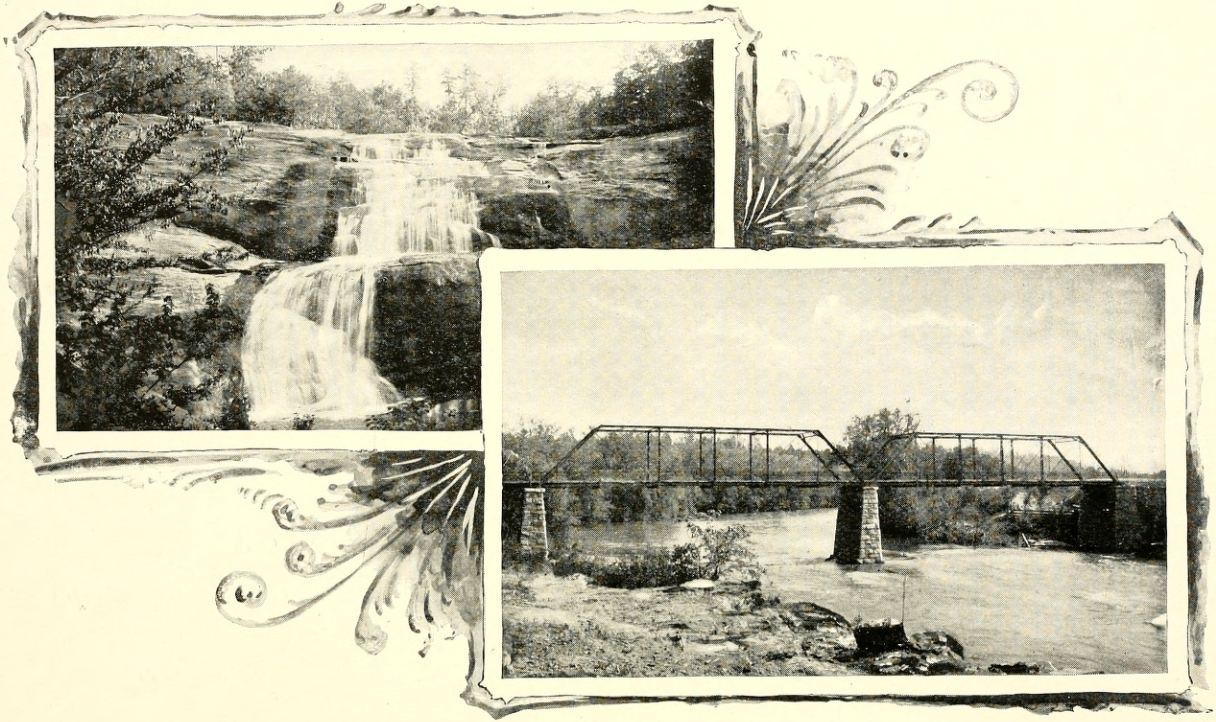
Of course, we do not know whether or not you are at all interested in the Southland, in general, or the goodly commonwealth of North Carolina, in particular; but the eyes of the world are upon the South today, and you will probably recall the fact that Chauncey M. Depew, who recently paid us a visit, told his fellow alumni at Yale College that "*The South is the Bonanza of the Future*" and that "*It has the best climate in the World*," and a great many other complimentary things that made us blush, but the truth of which we will have to confess.

In October, 1895, a notable company of Chicago's leading business men visited the Atlanta Exposition and various other points in the South, and afterwards some of the party wrote to the *Mannfactnrers Record* of Baltimore, giving their impressions of the South, which were all most favorable. President H. H. Higginbotham, of the World's Columbian Exposition, said in that paper:—"*The tide of immigration will hereafter be in the direction of the waterfowl in its flight from zone to zone.*" President E. G. Keith, of the Metropolitan National Bank of Chicago said:—"*The tendency of immigration, which has been pushing steadily Westward for the past fifty years, will be turned by the attractive featnres of these regions to the Sonth, and with it prosperity to that section, which is warranted by the promising resonrces and possibilities.*"

In the same strain wrote N. G. Iglehart, Wm. K. Ackerman, L. W. Noyes and C. H. Chappel, men whose judgment "goes" in a city that beats the world for snap and enterprise.

THE OLD NORTH STATE.

Perhaps you have seen the statement in some of the school books that "the chief products of North Carolina are tar, pitch and turpentine," but as a matter of fact, the annual output of



WATERFALL NEAR VALDESE.

COUNTY BRIDGE ACROSS THE CATAWBA,
AT MORGANTON

one of North Carolina's tobacco factories, (and there are 110 in the state) equals in value the product of all her turpentine forests. North Carolina alone, of all the states, fills all the blanks in the census covering field crops and products of the mine and forest. No other state in all the list has such a variety of soils and climate and scenery. Down in Columbus county the palmetto tree shades the shores of placid lake Waccamaw, suggesting the latitude of the Everglades, and up in Mitchell and Yancey and Watauga counties the dark, silent forests of fir and beechwood and sugar maple will remind one of the timber regions of the upper Penobscot. Sugar cane grows in Louisiana and maple sugar is a New Hampshire product, but North Carolina produces both. The alligator basks in the Eastern sunshine and the snow-birds nest in the Western shadows. Such is North Carolina in extent and in variety of products.

THE COUNTY OF BURKE, AND THE TOWN OF MORGANTON.

If Mr. Depew was right in calling the South the "Bonanza of the future," then North Carolina is the Bonanza of the South, and the famous county of Burke, away up here under the mile-high peaks of the big Blue Ridge, is the richest, rarest nugget in all the golden vein.

It lies three hundred and fifty miles from the sea-coast and is still one hundred and fifty miles East of the Western-most boundary of the state. The Western North Carolina branch of the great Southern Railway cuts it in half as it spins onward towards Asheville, fifty miles further in the mountain shadows. To connect its county-seat with the town of Shelby on the Seaboard Air-line system, twenty-three out of forty miles of the Morganton & Shelby Railroad have been graded. Here on the banks of the broad Catawba stands the ancient borough of Morganton, that one of the old presidents of the University of North Carolina, pronounced the most beautifully located town in all the Appalachian system; and which,

(because the State has located here two of its greatest and costliest institutions, and because of the penchant of its citizens for filling important State offices, time out of mind), has been called "The Western Capital of North Carolina."

One third of the area of Burke County is mountainous, the balance being low, rolling hills, thickly threaded with fertile valleys. The position of Morganton, its county seat, is 35° and 45′ north latitude and 81° 44′ west longitude. To put it another way, it has the same latitude as Yeddo in Japan, and Teheran in Persia, and of Damascus, and the islands of Cyprus

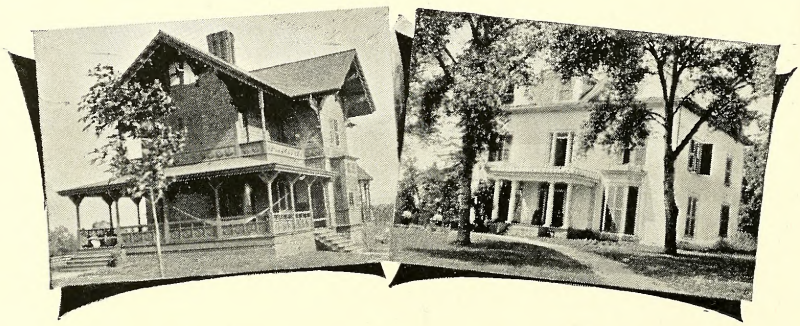
A Morganton Suburban Residence Street.

and of Tunis and Algiers; and longitudinally it is in line with the centre of Hudson's Bay, and Cleveland Ohio and the Florida Keys, and the city of Matanzas, in Cuba and is twenty five miles further to Westward than Point Parina and Cape Blanco, the most Western projections of the great South American Continent.

Pullman cars run direct from Jersey City to Morganton in about sixteen hours over the Southern Railway, and if you are travelling Northward you may take your supper in Morganton, your breakfast in Washington, and, if you strike the right ferry boat, lunch at your New York club by 12.30 sharp.

A HERD OF HOLSTEINS—State Hospital Farm.

The county contains 379,347 acres of land, and has 16,000 inhabitants of whom sixteen per-cent. are colored. The town of Morganton, founded in 1784, celebrated its one hundred anniversary with a population of 800. The census of 1890 showed that it contained 1557 people and a census taken by the town in July 1895 showed a population of 2475, not counting the thousand or so wards of the State in its great charities located here. The town has handsome churches, good schools, social and literary clubs, Masonic and Pythian Lodges, beautiful residences and many cultivated and hospitable people.



TYPICAL MORGANTON RESIDENCES OF THE OLD AND THE NEW REGIME.

Its banking facilities are good, it has one of the best constructed electric light plants to be found in the country, a model telephone system and an ice plant are being installed; and it has the largest steam tannery in the South, a cotton mill, a smoking tobacco factory, a roller mill, printing establishments, wood-working and building supply mills, newspapers, and almost everything appendant and appurtenant to a well regulated town.

A RESTFUL REALM OF BEAUTY.

Beautiful Country! Well, come and see. If there is anywhere on the broad, green footstool a perfect blending of all that makes a landscape inspiring and restful to eye and brain and that satisfies that atavic yearning for beauteous woods and fields and streams that every son and daughter of Adam has felt sometime since the day when the first tenants

IN SILVER CREEK VALLEY—South Mountains in Background.

of Eden got notice to quit, it is in this same county of Burke, where the Catawba sweeps seaward between the Eseeolas and the South Mountains, mingling its waters with a score of tributary streams, cold, clear and sparkling from the rugged mountains to Northward or tawny and turbid from the gold fields to Southward.

If we could take you with us for a five mile drive from Morganton to one of the peaks of the South Mountains, you would look down to the North and West on what appeared to be a broad, level plain, half field and half forest, entirely circumvallated by lofty forest-crowned mountains, save only where to Eastward the great blue rampart is cleft by the Catawba, rolling away to change its name to Santee down in the "Palmetto State." You would be looking from an elevation 3000 feet above sea level and the wide, rolling plain below would average 1500 feet above the tide. You would see along the Northern and Western sky-line an unbroken succession of mountain peaks, sweeping across the whole breadth of the State from Virginia to South Carolina. In the centre of the line you would see that queer mass of stone, 4000 feet tall by the yard stick, which the Cherokees called Attacoa, but which the pale faces, who did not know what Attacoa meant, called "Table Rock." And on either side of Attacoa, which Indian tradition says was a sacrificial altar of the Manitou, we would point out to you the sharp granite beak of "Hawks Bill" and the dizzy precipice of "Short Off" where the Linville has reft the Eseeolas in twain, and the long range called none too euphoniously "Jonas Ridge," on whose "topmost towering height" old "Uncle Ben" Barrier has his buckwheat fields and looks down serenely from his timothy "meadows" on four states of this indissoluble union. To Northward the lofty crest of the Blue Ridge, with its soft, billowy outline, curves majestically through the smaller ranges, with the hotels at Blowing Rock silhouetted against the sky; while the famous Yohnahlossee road, winding dizzily along the crags and through the black fir forests, can be discerned, though forty miles away by the stroke of the eagle's wing. The hoary old "Grandfather," highest peak of the Blue Ridge, (5940 feet) from whose foothills flow the headsprings of important tributaries of the Great Kanawha, the Tennessee, the

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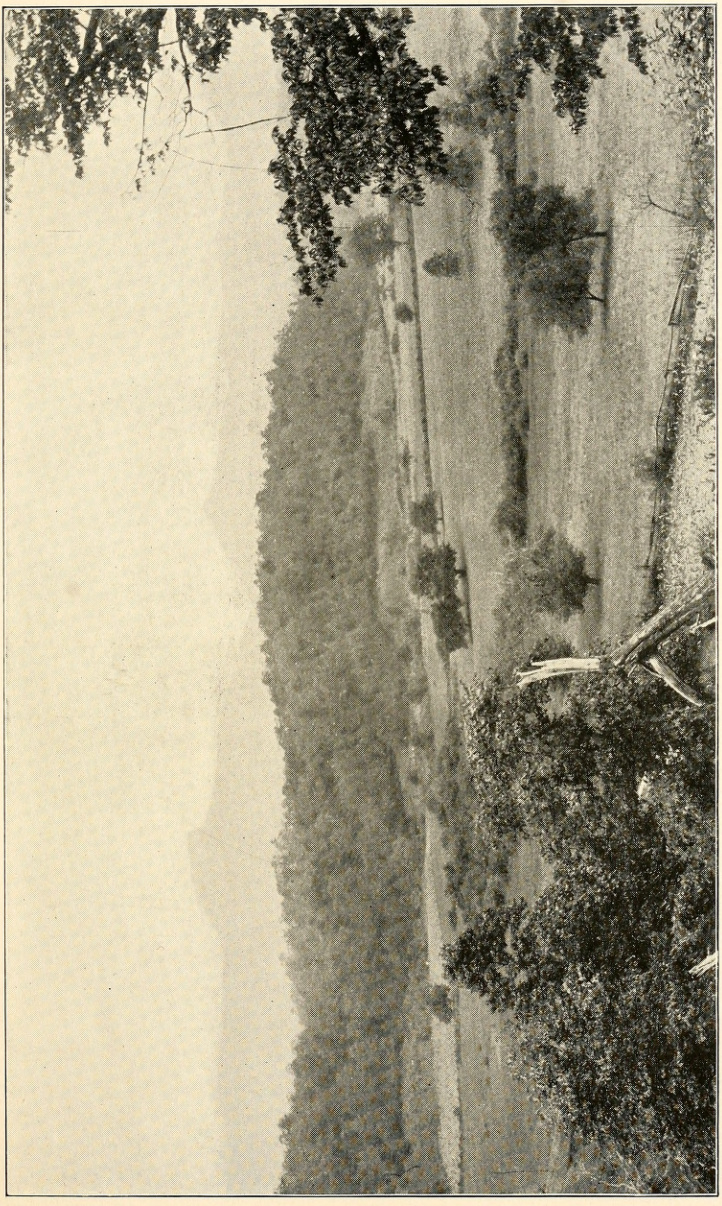


THE VALLEY OF IRISH CREEK—MT. ATTACOA IN BACKGROUND.

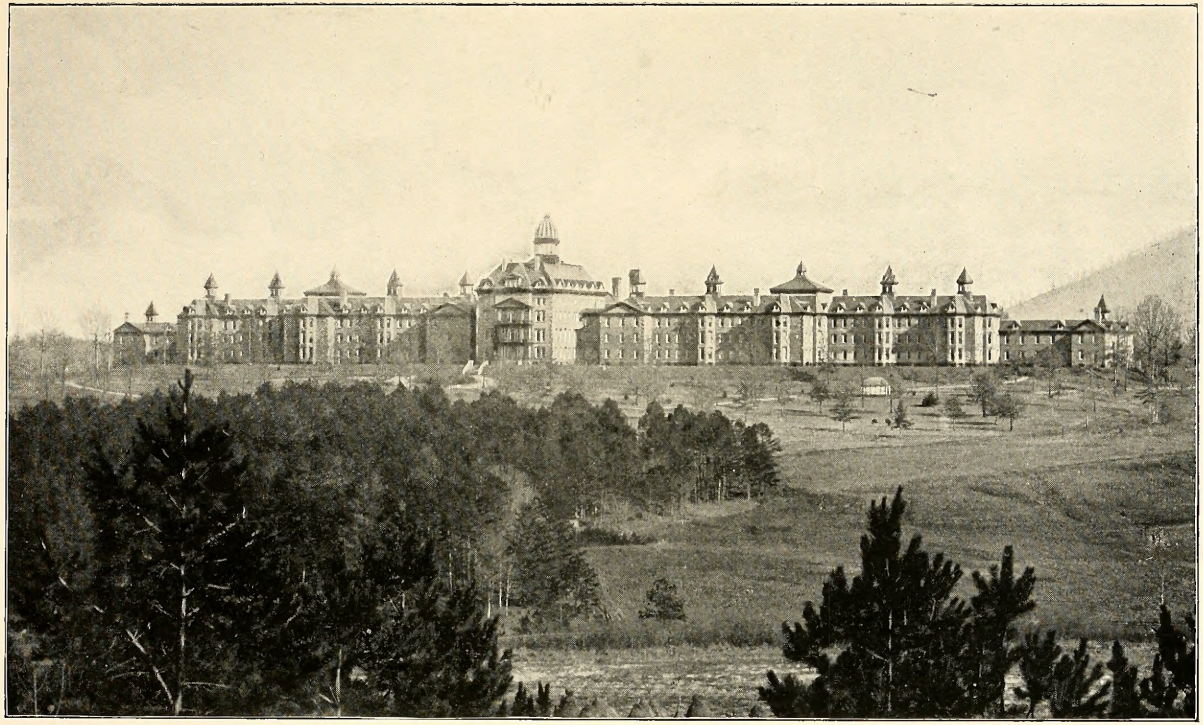
Pee Dee and the Santee rivers, is a striking feature of the landscape; and we would see a bit of the treeless top of the "Roan," (6,306 feet); and, sweeping round to the Southwest we would behold, somber, shadowy, superb, the Titan uplifts of the Black Mountain chain, with a full score of peaks as high as Mount Washington, all dominated by "His Royal Highness," Mount Mitchell, who stands near 7000 feet "in his stockings" and thrusts his gnarled balsam firs farther up towards the stars than any neck of woods between the Rockies and the Atlantic.

Had Rasselas known this valley, the "Tah-ko-ee" land of the Cherokees, the prize of many a prehistoric battle, the arena of many a latter day struggle on hustings or forum—he would never have sought for the hidden portal that opened on the land of the unknown.

A GREAT NATURAL SANATORIUM.

The question of climate is one of universal interest. Climate has made one nation conquerors and another slaves; one people sluggish and bestial, another progressive, ambitious, invincible. The desire for good health and long life is coextensive with the human race. "All that a man hath will he give for his life," said the Prince of Darkness when he scoffed at the righteousness of the godly man of Uz. And what is life without health? And nowhere is health more universal than in this wonderful Sanatorium which the Supreme Architect has reared in the Catawba valley; with its walls of beautiful blue mountains and its roof of sunny skies and its floor a cunningly wrought mosaic of green woods and brown fields and silvery streams!

You will doubtless agree that what is wanted by Northerner and Southerner alike in the way of climate is not the enervating, humid air of the far South, or the icy blasts that sweep across our higher mountains; but a happy mean, with just enough snap in the air to keep your energies strung up to the right pitch and just enough of the warmth of the Southern sun to keep away the damp that walketh in darkness and the blizzard that wasteth at noonday; a land where drought is a stranger and where the out door air is a tonic and an elixir



STATE HOSPITAL AT MORGANTON.

from January till December. Such a land is the mountain-encircled country of which the town of Morganton is the geographical and business centre. It is protected from the cold winds of the North-West by a wall the Titans could not have built, a mile high and a hundred miles long. This great mountain barrier not only keeps out the blizzard of the winter season, but, in summer, clouds form in the dense, unbroken forests and sweep across the plain with pleasant showers, and the great peaks send down at nightfall, even when the summer days are warmest, the most delightful breezes to fan you to sleep.

And so it has come about that Morganton is attracting the notice of the people of the North as a pleasant place to spend the winter while the Southerners from the tide-water section have been coming here to spend the summer for many generations, because there are no mosquitoes and because the nights are always cool and refreshing.

MARKED WITH A WHITE STONE.

If you will take the "health maps" prepared by the U. S. Census Department in 1870, you will see that Burke and portions of three adjoining counties are marked in white to indicate that *they were absolutely free from lung and throat diseases.* The people of the county did not think much about this fact and have never said much about it because they thought it was a very natural condition of affairs, and it never occurred to them that there were thousands and tens of thousands of people in this broad land of ours to whom such a spot would be a city of refuge and a haven of rest. The State of North Carolina noticed this very significant fact, however, and so it bought seven hundred acres of land just outside of the corporate limits of Morganton and has erected here a magnificent hospital for the insane. Its main building has a frontage 200 feet greater than the Capitol at Washington and it accommodates 700 patients. It stands in a beautiful park of 100 acres and fronts another great building on an opposite hill just completed by the State as a school for the Deaf and Dumb, where 350 of the little unfortunates will receive the best instruction and training to be had anywhere in the United States.

STATE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB, MORGANTON, N. C.

Morganton would never have been chosen as the site of these two great public charities in the face of the sharpest competition from larger towns claiming equal climatic advantages, had it not been demonstrated that none of the competing points had the same fortunate environment. Results are showing the wisdom of the State's choice, for while the average death rate in the fifty-eight hospitals for the insane throughout the United States has been, for the past ten years, *eight per cent.* of the number admitted, the death rate at the Morganton institution, for the same period, has averaged only *four per cent.* Splendid management and unsurpassed climatic conditions have both contributed to bringing about this remarkable result.

We might add that the men who manage and control some of Morganton's most important interests came here from the North in search of health, and, finding it, have made their homes and transferred their investments to what they believe to be the veritable "garden spot." Every year the Northern colony increases, and there is still room and a hearty welcome for many more.

CLIMATIC COMPARISONS.

The mean annual temperature for Morganton, as given by the State Agricultural Department, is 56.8°, the mean for spring, summer, autumn and winter being respectively 57.2°, 73.6°, 58.1°, and 42.9°. By way of comparison it may be stated that Venice has a mean annual temperature of 56.7° and a mean winter temperature of 38.6°, its summers being hotter and *its winters colder than ours;* while the mean winter temperatures of Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, Asheville and Pensacola are 28.9°, 27.4°, 34.5°, 38° and 56.5°, respectively. Between the winter temperature of Chicago and that of Pensacola, there is an average difference of twenty-nine degrees, while Morganton's winter temperature of 42° is exactly midway between the two extremes—*the ideal winter climate.*

The mean annual precipitation, as shown by the records of twenty years, is 51.64 inches, so evenly distributed throughout the year that the mean rainfall for no month exceeds 5.79 or falls under 3.32 inches.

HARVEST SCENE IN THE CATAWBA VALLEY—"QUAKER MEADOW" FARM.

STREAMS AND WATER POWERS.

There are in the county, besides the Catawba, four rivers, and creeks and smaller streams without number, which, rising in the mountains on either side of the wide central valley, flow between the hills through fertile fields to join the larger stream. One of these streams, the Linville (the Eseeola of the music-tongued Cherokees), literally tumbles into Burke from the Mitchell county highlands with a sheer fall of eighty feet, and then sweeps Catawba-ward for ten miles through a wild, cliff-walled cañon, resembling nothing else so much as the chasms of the Saguenay; falling in eight miles fifteen hundred feet and filling the mountain glens with ceaseless thunder. Then it rushes madly along under the beetling crags of "Short Off," and so out into the sunny fields, with its water as clear and as sparkling and as cold and as pure as the world-famed fountains of Vichy. The lower Linville valley has been musical with the songs of the plough-boy since, when in 1766, William Linville and his son, chasing a wounded elk through the deep pools under "Short Off," were tomahawked and scalped by the Indians and left their names to the crystal river whose waters gave them sepulture. For a century past, too, men and women have been travelling the trail that winds along the bowlder-strewn crest of the Eseeolas and have peered down the dizzy precipices, some of them sheer one thousand feet, to see the silvery thread of the river fretting down the cañon, and have visited the "Big Falls" where the river takes its first mad plunge into the gulf; and many generations of fishermen have lured the wily speckled trout from the seething caldron beneath the cataract. But down the river from the falls to the fields in all the days of the dominion of the white man, not a score of them have ever gone, and they the hardiest and most venturesome. A little party of engineers, looking out a path for a railway, once made the trip, and the story goes that they were forced to take their axes off the helves before they could get them through the jungle of twisted kalmia and gnarled rhododendron and great rock-anchored black firs and splintered gneiss masses, wrenched by the Frost King from the overhanging cliffs.

LINVILLE RIVER AND SHORT-OFF MOUNTAIN—BURKE COUNTY.

Upper, Creek, Wilson's Creek, Steele's Creek, Paddies Creek, Laurel Creek, Irish Creek and both branches of what is called the South Fork of the Catawba, in the south Mountains, are all clear, beautiful streams, with many rapids and waterfalls that will attract the tourist and furnish abundant waterpower to run scores of great factories. No more fertile valleys are to be found in Western North Carolina than along these streams and on Johns River, Silver Creek, Lower Creek, Muddy Creek and Hunting Creek, all in the county of Burke.

The transmission, storage and utilization of electrical energy is every year being simplified and cheapened and every year this subtle agency is being made to contribute more largely to our comfort and convenience and pleasure. There is waterpower enough in the cataracts and rapids on Linville river, Upper Creek, and South Fork rivers alone to gridiron the Catawba valley with electrical railways and dot it thickly with flourishing manufacturing towns and to supply its inhabitants with all the electrical luxuries and conveniences of which Edison or Tesla have ever dreamed.

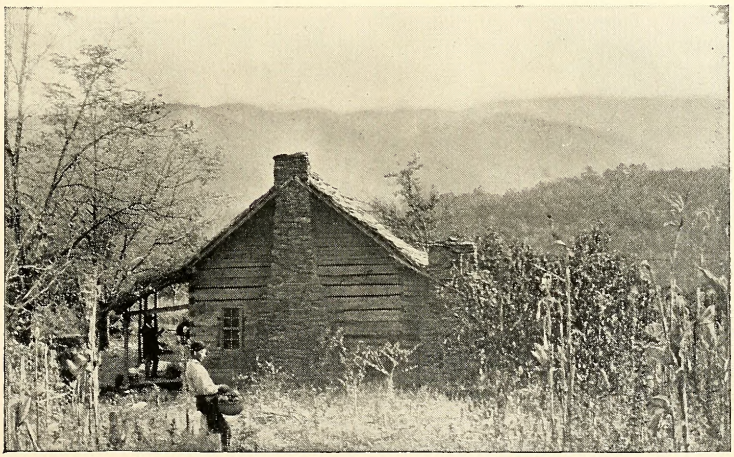
FIELD AND GARDEN.

Corn, wheat, oats and rye yield in Burke a good return to the farmer, the first mentioned crop growing in the rich, loamy soil along the streams almost as it does on the fresh prairie lands of the North West, and having immunity from storms of wind and parching drought and the blight of early frosts. Clover and the grasses grow well in the strong clay soils, and both sweet and Irish potatoes yield abundantly, 300 bushels of the former and 250 of the latter vegetable per acre being not an unusual crop. At the Hospital farm near Morganton 2100 bushels of sweet potatoes were grown on six acres, and on six acres planted inside the corporate limits one of the citizens of Morganton, in 1894, made a net profit of $600. Although cotton is a staple crop in the adjoining counties of Cleveland and Catawba, only a few bales are grown in Burke in the extreme eastern and south-eastern edge of the county, most of its area being too elevated for that crop. The most valuable colors and weights of "golden tobacco" are grown,

and Burke county tobacco was awarded the first premium at the Vienna Exposition. The farmers of the Catawba valley enjoy good health, have everywhere an abundance of pure, cold water for man and beast, and have a climate *which allows them to work out of doors every day in the year when it is not raining*. Every farm has an abundance of timber for fuel and fencing. The farm mortgage and the crop lien are unknown to them, and nowhere on earth will you find a more independent class of people.

FRUIT CULTURE AND THE "THERMAL BELT."

Apples, pears, plums, peaches and the grape grow as well in Burke as anywhere in the South, and it has besides this distinction :—In the South Mountains, which fill the Southern third of the county with countless peaks, is what is called the



Typical South Mountain Cabin—in Thermal Belt.

"Thermal Belt," where over a considerable area orchards and vinyards are rarely injured by the frosts, and where the apple, the pear the peach, and the grape, attain a size and a perfection of shape and a delicacy of flavor that you have been taught to believe only possible on the sun-kissed hills of California. The "oldest inhabitants" of Burke, (and two of

them died during the month of March, 1895 aged 107 and 104 years, respectively,) attest the truth of the statement that since the county was settled, when North Carolina extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific and belonged to the "Lords Proprietors," there was never a failure of the South Mountain fruit crop, save once, and that was during the blizzard of 1894. In discussing the phenomena of this Thermal Belt, in a very interesting publication entitled "The Hand Book of North Carolina," prepared by the State Agricultural Department, occurs, on page 46, the following paragraph :—

"The fact remains that within the limits of these frost belts fruits never fail, and at the height of 1,500 to 2000 feet (hoar) frosts never fall. Such localities are found along the face of the Blue Ridge in Burke and McDowell counties and along the face of the South Mountains in Burke. * * * * In the future this phenomenal section must become of inestimable value; *for nowhere is there such certain assurance of the security and maturity of peaches and other tender fruit crops, or of the grape;* to the successful cultivation of the grape the soil and the general conditions of the climate offer numerous inducements."

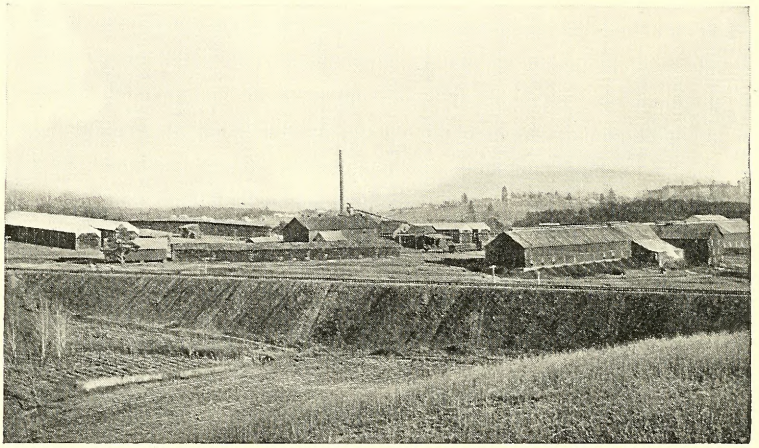
The area described in the "Hand Book," as within the "Thermal Belt," embraces also the Tryon Mountain, in Polk, and the Brushy Mountains, in Caldwell and Alexander counties. The people owning these valuable lands in Burke have, as a rule, paid very little attention to fruit culture and have contented themselves with supplying the local market, when they should have been shipping immense quantities to the cities. Land in this favored section can be bought to-day at from $3 to $10 per acre, and a few years more will doubtless see the best of it owned by an intelligent class of fruit growers, who will fill the mountain sides with orchards and vinyards and obtain every year a full and sure return for the capital and labor expended. Morganton people have recently purchased several miles of these mountain tops, within an hour's drive of the town, which they are opening up with good roads. They will plant out orchards and vinyards and build summer cottages on the crest of "Denton's Mountain," 2,800 feet above the sea, where the views are fine, and the water pure, and the breezes cool by night and by day.

Monazite is found in all the gold district, and is an important by-product of the mines. It is shipped to England and Austria, where it is used in manufacturing the Wellsbach gas hood. A few diamonds have been found in the county, and aquamarines, amethysts, zircons, rubies, agates and garnets both crystal and massive, are found, the latter in such abundance that it has been shipped by the carload to be used in manufacturing sand paper. Iron ore is found in many parts of the county, though no attempt has ever been made to develop any of the mines. There are outcroppings of magnetic iron over a large territory in the South Mountains, five miles South of Morganton. Limonite ores are found in the Eastern part of the county near the South Fork of the Catawba, and also on Paddies creek and Short Off mountain. There is plenty of limestone for fluxing, on the North Fork of the Catawba, near the two last mentioned ore banks. Magnetite and hematite have been found on Steele's creek in the Northern part of the county, at no great distance from the great magnetic iron mines at Cranberry, in the adjoining county of Mitchell, which are free from phosphorous and sulphur and which yield from 60 to 68 per cent of iron. Kaolin, corundum and graphite have been found in the South Fork valley, and there are large deposits of talc on Brown Mountain and on Jonas' Ridge. The mineral wealth of the county is now attracting wide attention, and the near future will witness a wonderful development, especially in the gold mining districts, where a good water supply, now practically secured, has been the one desideratum to extensive and profitable operations.

VAST FOREST WEALTH.

One third of the County's area, 620 square miles, is still virgin forest, and there are various timber tracts, owned by firms and corporations, ranging in extent from 5,000 to 40,000 acres. The forests consist principally of oak, hickory, poplar and yellow pine ; with white pine, chestnut, maple, locust, birch and other hardwoods in the mountains. There are

strips of fir trees along the higher mountain streams and in some sections wild cherry and mountain mahogany. Black walnut and sycamore trees of large size grow along the banks of the larger streams. The rock chestnut-oak, so valuable for its tan bark, is found on all the mountain sides and many thousands of dollars are annually paid out to the "bark peelers."



Burke Tanning Company's Plant, Morganton, N. C.

ATTRACTIONS FOR THE BOTANIST.

The lover of wild flowers will find them nowhere else on earth in greater profusiou than here; so say distinguished botanists like Bartram, the Michauxs, DeSchweinitz, Nutall, Gray, Carey and Curtis, the latter of whom said that "in all the elements which render forest scenery attractive, no portion of the United States presents them in happier combination, in greater perfection, or in larger extent than the mountains of North Carolina." Along the rivers of Burke and in the crevices of the beetling crags is the home of the splendid *rhododendron Catawbiense*, that festoons the cliffs as with a brilliant garland of roses. The woods in Spring are all pink

and white with the bloom of the kalmia and of snowy white and orange and yellow azalia, and fragrant with the odor of the ever present calicanthus ; and, as the seasons change from Spring to Autumn, are decked with all the flowers of this latitude from the wild violet and the modest bloom of the trailing arbutus in the shadow, to the saucy, high-headed golden rod, disporting itself in the rays of the September sun.

TO TOURIST, ARTIST AND SPORTSMAN.

We have said enough in the preceding pages to show that the lover of Nature will find in the mountains and valleys of Burke much to attract and interest him. There is in all the Appalachians no territory of equal area that affords more wild and rugged scenery than the region around Table Rock and Linville Falls and cañon. A turnpike road is now being constructed by citizens of Morganton leading through that beautiful region to the famous summer resorts at Linville and at Blowing Rock. Roads are also under construction that will make the highest peaks of the South Mountains easily accessible from Morganton by pleasant drives of an hour and a half's duration. The town is so situated that its citizens can, if they wish, spend the summer days in their offices in town, and their evenings and nights at an elevation 3,000 feet above the sea, or 750 feet higher than Asheville, long noted as a summer resort.

While not claiming to be a " Sportsman's paradise," those who are fond of gun and rod can find good sport in the fields and forests and along the streams of Burke. There is good quail shooting all along the Catawba and its tributaries. In the wild mountains in the Northern end of the county black bears, deer, wild turkeys and ruffed grouse are still found, not abundantly, but frequently enough to interest the skillful hunter. At certain seasons the rivers and ponds afford good duck shooting, and the chestnut groves swarm with grey squirrels in autumn.

Linville River, above the falls, and the head streams of Upper Creek, and of Harper's Creek, just across the Caldwell county line, abound with speckled brook trout, and camping parties for the trout streams go out every fall and spring from Morganton.

WALDENSIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL VALDESE, BURKE COUNTY.

MINERAL SPRINGS.

Mineral springs abound in the county. Connelly Springs, on the Southern Railway, ten miles below Morganton is a very popular Summer resort where the waters are fine and the cuisine excellent. Glen Alpine Springs, in a deep gorge of the South Mountains, twelve miles South of Morganton, is beautifully situated and the water has wonderful curative properties. Piedmont Springs, on the bank of crystal Upper creek under the shades of Brown Mountain, is a picturesque spot, once a very popular resort, but now the property of an absentee landlord who has closed it to the public.

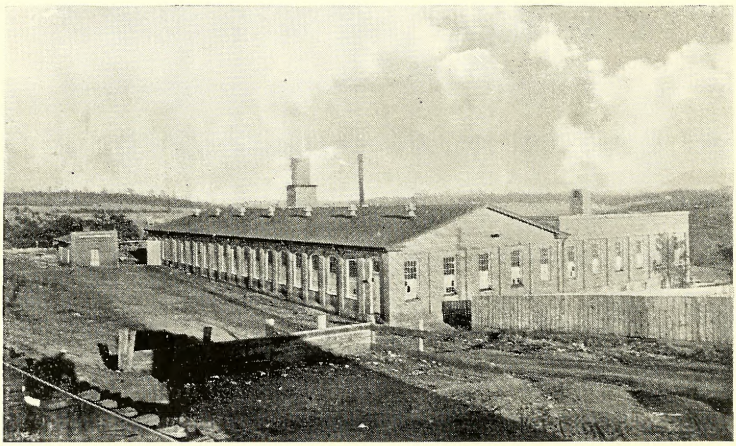
CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE.—THE WALDENSES.

Among the first settlers of the Catawba Highlands were a score or more of colonists who had settled first in Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia, and in the counties of Chester and York and Lancaster, and so many of them left relatives in the "Keystone State" that one cannot pick up a paper from that district without being struck with the number of family names that are identical with those in the Catawba valley. Adventurous, daring spirits they were, as the conditions and manners of the day demanded. The hardy Scotch and English and German Colonists who first came into this "No Man's Land" from Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia were joined by stragglers from the Scotch-Irish settlements on the Cape Fear river in North Carolina; and it is a remarkable fact that, of the white population of Burke and adjoining counties, fully ninety per cent are the descendants of these early settlers.

A colony of Waldenses, the world famed Vaudois of the Italian Alps, between 250 and 300 strong, have settled in Burke in the past three years, on five thousand acres of land located on both sides of the Southern Railway, eight miles East of Morganton. Here they have established a little village called Valdese, in which are located their church, school and postoffice, and the home of their pastor, Rev.

Barth. Soulier, a scholarly Christian gentleman, who is entirely devoted to the interests of his people. Outside of these interesting, law abiding, industrious people there are not one hundred foreigners in the county.

The "natives" are, as a rule, brave, hospitable and law-abiding, and, being the descendants of men who rebelled against the oppressor "on the other side of the pond," and who gave up home and country rather than yield their principles, they are the last people on earth to tolerate any interference with civil or religious liberty. They ask no questions of the stranger, contenting themselves if he observe those fundamental precepts which the old law writers declared contained "all the law and the prophets"—to live honestly, hurt nobody, and render unto every man his due.



ALPINE COTTON MILLS, MORGANTON, N. C.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.

The abundance of waterpower, the proximity to the cotton fields and the healthfulness of the climate contribute to make Burke County an inviting field for the manufacturer of cotton goods. The great forests of pine oak and various valuable hard woods offer inducements to the manufacturer of furniture and wood pulp paper and of an infinite variety of articles made of wood. The location here of a great tannery, with a

capacity of 900 hides of heavy oak-tanned belting per week, makes Morganton a most advantageous point for the manufacture of leather belting. With Asheville, one of the South's greatest resorts, only two hours away and with quick, direct communication over the Southern Railway with the great markets of Richmond, Washington, Baltimore Philadelphia and New York, a fine field is furnished to the truck farmer, the fruit grower, the dairyman and the poultry raiser. Wide areas of the county are especially adapted to raising grapes apples and pears for market. Experiments on the State Hospital farm show that celery can be grown here as fine as that which comes from Kalamazoo. On the same farm the finest tube roses have been grown for shipment to Europe. Strawberries, raspberries and other small fruits are grown of the largest size and the finest flavor. Fruit and vegetable canneries will soon become an important industry in the Catawba Valley.

The nurseryman will find here a good local market and will be located in the centre of a territory where fruit culture is now an important business and will at a day not far distant assume immense proportions. The mountains of the Northern part of the county afford fine pasturage for cattle of all kinds, and those well acquainted with the mountains say that sheep keep fat on the range all the year round. There are one hundred thousand acres of these ranges, in an unbroken body.

To sum it all up,—with abundant waterpower, cheap fuel, cheap labor (because the cost of living is small), with proximity to the cotton fields; with fertile soil and a healthful climate, the variety of industries that can be profitably pursued is well night infinite, and need not be enumerated here.

OF HISTORIC INTEREST.

One of the most exquisite views to be had from the grand old hills around Morganton is that of the broad, level acres of "Quaker Meadow" farm just across the Catawba river. You look down upon it from the wooded eminence on the South bank of the stream. Just at your feet is the broad river,

outlined by old birch trees and sycamores and tangled muscadine vines, and festoons of Virginia creeper and great flaring poppies and kalmia jungles where the hills sweep down to the water's brink. And just beyond lie the rich, level, loamy bottom lands stretching back a straight mile to the forest-crowned hills that seem to blend with the mountains beyond. And you will see these fields, according to the season, sear and brown with the stubble where the quail love to hide, or carpeted with the soft green-sward of the wheat fields in early spring time, or dotted thickly with conical ricks of aromatic clover, or gleaming with the sheen of the harvest, or bearing the tall, waving, tasselled Indian corn on many a goodly acre.

Away back in the dim past, tradition says, right in the centre of the picture stood the most important town of the peaceful Catawba Indians, and to this tradition color is given by the fact that the ploughboy rarely runs his furrow twice across the fields without turning up bits of Indian pottery and arrow and spear heads and celts; and now and then, along with all other kinds of stone implements, ponderous stone battle axes that must have been wielded by a race of giants. After the Indian town had been destroyed by the warlike Cherokees, two Quakers, who hailed from nobody knows where, came up the Catawba to trade with the Indians and settled on the old town site which has from that day borne the name of "Quaker Meadows." Here, at a later period lived the McDowells, the men who led the brave "Burke Boys" to fight with the soldiers of King George at Pacolet and Musgrove's Mill and Thickety in South Carolina, and who sent couriers in every direction to call the mountaineers together to check the advance of Ferguson. It was at Quaker Meadow farm that the troops of the McDowells and of Campbell and Shelby and Sevier and Cleveland and Winston rendezvoused on the 30th of September, 1780, and it was under the great "Council Oak," still standing, that they held their council of war before they marched away to crush the British leader at Kings Mountain. Here the patriots returned two weeks later with six hundred prisoners and the spoils of battle and here, on the crest of a great hill that commands the whole of the beautiful scenery, are the rude stones that mark the graves of two of the "Heroes of Kings Mountain."

"COUNCIL OAK"—Quaker Meadow Farm.

IN CONCLUSION.

But we are not going to write a history of Burke county, which, as Kipling would say, "is another story." The *future* of this healthful, beautiful country is what we want to interest you in. More capital and more men of pluck and intelligence are needed to develop and beautify this favored land No country offers more security and certainty of return for money and energy intelligently expended.

If we have succeeded in interesting you sufficiently to cause you to remember Burke county and Morganton when you are seeking a Southern home or a Southern resort, we will have attained the object which led to the publication of this pamphlet.

SOME OUTSIDE TESTIMONY.

Morganton lies in the midst of mountains as beautiful as the eye ever rested upon and filled with a wealth of mineral deposits. which include gold, iron, copper, zinc and mica.

Pulmonary or malarial diseases do not originate there, indeed it is a sanitarium for those suffering from lung troubles. The general level of the plain is about 1,500 feet above tide, and, owing to the conformation of the surrounding heights, tornadoes are impossible and storms insignificant, the great blasts passing high overhead. There are fine breezes from the mountains, with cool, refreshing nights in summer. while the severe rigors of winter are unknown.—Cambridge, (Mass.), *Tribune.*

Probably no where else in the world is there a finer climate than that of Western North Carolina. This is the almost unvarying testimony of people who visit that section. Morganton, N. C., situated foot of the mountains, is in one of the best parts of the State, in a country rich in productive soil and agricultural capabilities, in timber, in water-powers, in beautiful scenery, and pre-eminently rich in healthfulness and delightful climate.—*Southern States Magazine*, Baltimore, Md.

When you reach Morganton the first thing you wish is, that your wife and children were here too, to share with you the pure water, the cool and delightful mountain air, and look upon the most beautiful scenery to be found anywhere on top of this green earth.—Raleigh, (N. C.) *Daily News Observer.*

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